3. Rehabilitation by providing a package of financial assistance.

(c) and (d) The information is being collected from the State Government of Bihar which will be laid down on the Table of the House.

Surprise Checking of FPSs

2513. SHRI IQBAL SINGH: Will the Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the steps taken by Government to strengthen and improve the Public Distribution System in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether there is any proposal to conduct surprise checks on the Fair Price Shops under the Public Distribution System in the country;

(d) if so, the details of surprise checks on the FPS in Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan; and;

(e) the remedial steps Government propose to take in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD AND MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV): (a) and (b) Strengthening and streamlinging the Public Distribution System is a continuous process. Suggestions and measures to improve the Public Distribution System (PDS) are discussed in the meetings of the Advisory Council on PDS in which Ministers incharge of Food and Civil Supplies Departments in the State Governments/UT Administrations are members. In 1992, as a measure to improve the reach of PDS, the Revamped PDS was launched. Under this scheme, foodgrains are issued at specially subsidised price in hill areas, tribal areas and Drought Prone Areas.

(c) to (e) The State Government/UT Administrations are responsible for all operational matters relating to the PDS including enforcement measures. State Governments/UT Administrations have been delegated the authority under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955 which enables them to take action against persons indulging in malpractices in the distribution of Commodities under the PDS. State Governments/UT Administrations carry out raids and surprise checks in addition to regular inspections as part of their enforcement function. The Central Government has also advised States/UTs to set up Vigilance Committees of Consumers at the Fair Price Shops level to ensure people's participation in the supervision of the PDS.

Drastic increase in penality prescribed for under age marriages

2514. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Karnataka High Court has recently recommended to the Union Government that penalty prescribed for under age marriages be drastically increased to punish the guilty:

(b) if so, whether despite Central law, the under age marriages are continuing in the country and there is no check on such acts by the Central Government or the State Governments; and

(c) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF WELFARE (SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOOWALIA): (a) No recommendation has so far been received.

(b) and (c) Does not arise.

अनुसूचित जातियों / अनुसूचित जनजातियों के छात्रों को छात्रावास संबंधी सुविधाएं और अनुसूचित जातियों / अनुसूचित जनजातियों में बीच में ही स्कूल छोड़ कर चले जाने वाले छात्रों को रोकने के लिये उठाये गये कदम

2515. **श्री अजीत जोगी:**
श्री सुरेन्द्र कुमार सिंह:

क्या कल्याण मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) पिछले तीन वर्षों के दौरान प्रति-वर्ष अनुसूचित जातियों और अनुसूचित जनजातियों के कितने छात्रों को छात्रावास सुविधाएं प्रदान की गयी है;